

Media Update

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Press Release

Migrants and refugees with disabilities must be priority in new Global Compact on Migration – UN experts

GENEVA (12 April 2017) – Dedicated human and financial resources must be made available for persons with disabilities in the new global framework on refugees and migrants, UN experts have urged, as an intergovernmental consultation is being launched.

The framework, which is called Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and is due to be adopted in 2018, will set out a range of principles and commitments among governments to enhance coordination on international migration.

“We need to be sure that, when world leaders commit to saving the lives of refugees and migrants, to protecting their rights and to sharing responsibility on a global scale, they don’t forget about persons with disabilities,” said Jose Brillantes, the Chair of the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of Their Families.

“We are deeply concerned about the precarious situation of persons with disabilities in the current migration crisis. Many countries lack formal procedures to identify migrants and refugees with disabilities and, consequently, fail to provide them with protection and essential services, such as shelter and medical care that are accessible and responsive to their needs,” said Catalina Devandas Aguilar, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



Currently, the absence of clearly defined disability-inclusive guidelines supported by sufficient funding further contributes to the exclusion of persons with disabilities and their extreme suffering.

“The new Global Compact is a unique opportunity to address the shortcomings of a migration and refugee system built on policies that lack consideration for persons with disabilities. We call on States to ensure the new framework includes dedicated human and financial resources to identify persons with disabilities in reception and detention centres and to provide adequate standards of living and healthcare, including psycho-social support. In addition, special efforts must be made to develop programmes targeting victims of torture and sexually based violence,” said Theresia Degener, the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

“The development and negotiations of the Global Compact for Migration will dominate the migration and refugee policy agenda for the next two years. Persons with disability and their organizations must be included in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the new framework. This would be truly standing up for the rights of persons with disabilities,” said Mr. Brillantes, Chair of the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and members of Their Families.

ENDS

The Committee on Migrant Workers and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have issued a joint statement on “Addressing disabilities in large-scale movements of refugees and Migrants”. To read it, please

visit: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CMW/JointStatementCMW-CRPDFINAL.pdf>

Background

Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)

CMW is a body of independent experts drawn from around the world, who serve in their personal capacity and not as representatives of States parties. The Committee monitors implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by its State parties.

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

CRPD is the body of independent experts drawn from around the world, who serve in their personal capacity and not as representatives of States parties. The Committee monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by its States Parties, which is intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar took office as the first Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 1 December 2014, following Human Rights Council resolution 26/20 establishing the new special procedures mandate.

For more information and media requests:

- On the Special Rapporteur, please contact Cristina Michels (+ 41 22 928 98 66 / cmichels@ohchr.org)
- On CRPD, please contact Jorge Araya (+ 41 22 917 91 06 / jaraya@ohchr.org)
- On CMW, please contact Bradford Smith (+ 41 22 917 93 35 / bsmith@ohchr.org)

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